

NOTES FROM THE PROVINCES.

THE first stone of the Manchester Collegiate School was laid on the 19th ultimo by J. C. Harter, Esq., in the presence of a very large number of the clergy of the established church, at the head of whom was the Rev. C. D. Wray, the vice dean. The direct object in view is to provide classical education for the sons of small tradesmen at a cheap rate.—During the past week, the last great blast of the cliffs for the purposes of the South Devon Railway took place at the end of the long tunnel, near the Parson and Clerk rock, Dawlish. It was arranged in two series of blasts, consisting of eight and eleven charges of powder respectively, and was intended to displace the large mass of rocky cliff immediately before the entrance of the tunnel. The enormous quantity of 42 cwt. of gunpowder was used, and the two largest charges contained 1000 lbs. of powder in each. The whole was under the direction of Mr. W. Glennie, the surveyor, assisted by Mr. Dawson, and proved eminently successful.—The Duke of Norfolk's patrimonial seat, Arundel Castle, is undergoing great improvements and embellishments, by direction of his grace, who is negotiating with the town council for the exchange of Brooklands, which the noble duke is understood to be desirous of adding to the Arundel estate.—Stevenstone, the ancient seat of Lord Rolle, is now undergoing considerable repairs by order of the trustees of the late lord. The interior of this fine old mansion, and the noble stabling, are to be put in order and painted, as well as new stabling erected—it is to be thoroughly restored to its best state and appearance, and the outlay will be considerable.—Thirlestane House is undergoing a further enlargement, by the addition of a second wing, corresponding in every respect with that erected by Lord Northwick some three or four years ago, and forming the present picture-gallery, to which purpose the new building, when complete, will also be appropriated. So extensive has the Thirlestane House collection of paintings become, that the present apartments, though forming one of the noblest suite of rooms devoted to the fine arts of which the country can boast, are found wholly inadequate to the reception of the many valuable additions which their noble owner is constantly making, and which, for want of wall-room whereon to hang them, are obliged to be ranged on the floors, or on temporary frames constructed for their reception. The new gallery will, however, in a great measure, remedy this inconvenience, by placing at his lordship's disposal a space equal to the exhibition of at least 300 or 400 pictures.—Mrs. and Miss Saunders are spoken of as likely to have the honour of laying the foundation stones of two new churches, to be erected at Morton and East Stockwith. The ceremony it is understood, will be performed in a few days.—The new Custom House, at Ipswich, being finished, the local authorities have determined upon commemorating the ceremony of the opening by a public dinner, to take place early in July. The suggestion emanated from the architect, Mr. J. M. Clark, and was instantly adopted by the mayor and town council.—The Weston-super-Mare Pier Company having recently purchased the island of Birnbeck, they propose annexing it to the main land by means of a suspension bridge, to be constructed on Mr. Dredge's principle. It has also been proposed to approach the island by means of a roadway, formed of loose stones at the base, with a crown on top of solid masonry. Mr. Dredge has furnished the committee with several designs for the suspension-bridge. The first represents the elevations and sections of the bridge; the second the details of construction; and the third, a perspective view as seen from the cliff. The whole length to be crossed is about 1,400 feet; of this he proposes that about 1,100 feet should be accomplished by means of the bridge, to be composed of iron, the central span of which would be 545 feet, and the outside openings 272 feet. The remaining 300 feet he proposes should be of solid masonry. The height of the towers above the roadway is intended to be 42 feet.—Upwards of 4,000*l.* has been subscribed in Burnley in less than two days for the erection of a Mechanics' Institution, including library, reading-room, museum, news-room, and lecture-hall.

COUNTY OF SOMERSET LUNATIC ASYLUM.

THE following are the tenders which were delivered at Bridgwater on the 30th ult. for the erection of the new asylum at Wells:—

Lock and Neaham, London	£39,989
Winland, do.	37,447
Stockholm, Bridgwater	34,050
Browne, Frome	33,786
Davis, Loo-gport	33,600
Lewis, Bath	32,990
Davis, Frome	32,932
Stent, Warminster	32,740
Sissons, Hull	32,160
Kirk, Steaford	30,800

The lowest was accepted.

Correspondence.

SUSPENSION BRIDGES.

SIR,—Mr. Dredge seems to be labouring under some error in his communication to your journal of last week relative to the nature of the accidents at Derby and Ashton-under-Lyne, which were not occasioned by erroneous principles of construction. The former, I believe, originated in consequence of the centres having been struck too early as from the extreme wetness of the season the mortar had not become sufficiently indurated, the latter from defective workmanship in the piers. In the event of a failure, from defective workmanship or other causes, in the piers or towers of a suspension bridge, even on Mr. Dredge's principles, I am inclined to think it would be fatal to the structure. Notwithstanding the beautiful aerial appearance of suspension bridges suitable for some situations, I am very much in favour of bridges of fixed principles for heavy, general traffic, where great strength and durability are required. If suspension bridges are so "perfectly quiescent," as Mr. Dredge would wish us to suppose, why are they not adapted on railways, where lightness and economy of construction are considered so essential?

I am, Sir, &c.,

Brecon, South Wales,
June 25, 1845.

B. B.

Miscellaneous.

FALL OF HOUSE IN WELLCLOSE-SQUARE.

—On Sunday morning last about 3 o'clock, the premises in the possession of the Rev. Mr. Smith, 17, Wellclose-square, and which were occupied as a Mariners' Church and Sailors' Orphan Asylum, together with a public-house known as the Mahogany Bar, and the upper part of the adjoining premises, fell with a tremendous crash. It is stated that some months since, when a saloon at the rear of the public-house was being built, an excavation was made for a cesspool, and that several alterations affecting the stability of the same premises were also made. These facts, together with the dilapidated state of the buildings, afford a reasonable solution of the cause of the accident, although the immediate cause is stated to be the removal of the floor of the church. Most fortunately, all the inmates escaped unhurt.

ENLARGEMENT OF NEWGATE MARKET.—A long discussion took place last week in the Court of Common Council on the enlargement of Newgate Market, as recommended by the Markets Committee in their report then presented. Mr. W. Jones, the chairman of the committee, informed the court, in calling their attention to the report, that the limit of the amount which might be required to enlarge the market was 60,000*l.* The report was ultimately referred back to the committee with instructions to report the present area of Newgate Market, the space proposed to be added, the sum estimated to be expended, and the plan of the building intended to be erected.

LIGHT FOR ALL NATIONS.—A few days since Admiral Dundas presented a petition to the House of Commons from Mr. Bush, stating that he had constructed a column on the Godwin Sands, and praying that the work might be inspected by a scientific engineer, with the view of erecting a light-house and fortifications for the protection of the trade in the Downs. It was referred to the committee on light-houses.

STATUE OF JAMES II. IN WHITEHALL GARDENS.—The doubt which has long prevailed respecting the artist of this statue has recently been cleared up by the appearance of a work entitled "The Autobiography of Sir John Bramston," printed by the Camden Society. The passage is as follows:—"On New Year's day, 1686, a statue in brass was to be seen (placed the day before), in the yard at Whitehall, made by Gibbons, at the charge of Toby Rustick, of the present King, James II." It thus turns out that Walpole had a correct impression of the truth when he wrote "I am the rather inclined to attribute the statue at Whitehall to Gibbons, because I know no other artist of that time capable of it."

BRISTOL ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS.—The works of art now exhibiting at the institution in Park-street consist for the most part of pictures known to London eyes. Uwins, Hart, E. Landseer, Martin, Severn, and Pyne, have contributed some of their productions, and although not so striking a collection as might be desired, is nevertheless tolerably satisfactory. Among the local artists we must mention especially, Mr. Hewitt, whose landscapes are exceedingly beautiful, and Mr. J. Fisher, who exhibits some excellent miniatures. An Art-Union has been formed in connection with the exhibition.

ANTIQUITY OF CHIMNEYS AND SMOKE-JACKS.—Mr. Jopling, in a letter to the editor of the *Mechanics' Magazine*, says, "when I wrote the description of 'Smith's metallic lining for chimneys,' fifteen years ago, I made research as to the antiquity of chimneys. The oldest certain act I found to be 1347, and it is conjectured they were invented in Italy. 'Smoke jacks,' which must have been invented subsequently to chimneys, are supposed to be of German origin, and from a painting which is known to be older than 1350, it is supposed they were in use before that period."

INSTITUTE OF THE FINE ARTS.—On Saturday last the first general meeting and conversations of the institute was held at Willis's Rooms, St. James's, and was well attended. There was an admirable collection of pictures, bronzes, and other works of art. It is gratifying to observe, that the institute is advancing very favourably notwithstanding the eyness with which it was at first regarded by the chiefs of the profession, and that it promises to aid materially in advancing the social position of artists.

NOTICES OF CONTRACTS.

[We are compelled by the interference of the Stamp Office to omit the names of the parties to whom tenders, &c., are to be addressed. For the convenience of our readers however, they are entered in a book, and may be seen on application at the office of "The Builder," 5, York-street, Covent-garden.]

For the Removal of several Wrecks in the Thames.

For the supply and erection of a Steam Cooking Apparatus at the New Workhouse at Cuckfield. To be capable of cooking food for 450 inmates, and providing Hot and Cold Water in the Scullery, Bath-rooms, and Wash-house, with a Closet for drying linen.

For furnishing and fixing an Engine Pump at the Sevenoaks Union.

For Building Sewers from Bloomsbury-street, Holborn, the length being about 3,400 feet; also in Gray's-Inn Lane, the length being about 800 feet.

For Building a New Farm-house at Swaresay, Cambridgeshire.

For 500 Tons of Guernsey Granite Lamps for breaking, and also for such further quantities as may be required previous to the 29th of September next, by the Guardians of the Poplar Union.

For 1,000 Tons of Scotch Pig Iron, and 500 Tons of Finers' Metal, to be delivered at Rotterdam in the months of July, August, and September.

For Building a New Church of Kentish Rag Stone and Caen Stone at Homerton (time extended).

For the execution of the Works necessary in the Extension of the Towing-path of the Regent's Canal, near the Hampstead Road Lock, St. Pancras.

For the Construction of a Shed at the Dock at Ratcliffe, for the Regent's Canal Company.

For the Erection of Two Cast Iron Bridges, one of 80 feet span, the other of 45 feet span, near the Hampstead Road Lock of the Regent's Canal Company.